

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 1919.—Copyright, 1919, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

SCARCITY OF APARTMENTS AND SOARING RENTS CAUSE
THAT IS TO LOOK TOWARDS SUBURBS FOR RELIEF

To Aid Those in Search of Homes "The Sun" Will Publish a Series of Articles on the A B C's of House Buying

Even before the dawn of civilization men felt the desire to acquire a little section of the earth that they could call their own and where they could feel secure from intrusion. It is probable that the prehistoric man would have been unable to give articulate expression to this desire, but he was capable of gratifying it. Home seeking was a simple affair in those days. If a desired cave or lair was tenanted there was no question of offering financial inducements to its occupant to vacate. The dexterous use of a jagged piece of rock or a rude club was sufficient to pass title until a more skilful or muscular home seeker appeared to take possession.

Later in history the possession of property was the mark which distinguished the noble from the serf. The landless man was an object of scorn and contempt, the slave of the land owner. To-day owing to changing economic conditions and the growth of our cities there has arisen a large class of individuals who are content to pass their lives in homes or apartments owned by others. Financial reasons are not the compelling motives which actuate this class. There are yearly rents paid in the fashionable residential districts of New York city which would more than suffice to purchase a handsome home in the suburbs. Yet those who prefer to rent rather than own claim that they are free to change their habitation whenever the whim seizes them and that they enjoy more comforts and have less responsibilities than the owners of suburban homes, and in addition they are spared the necessity of commuting. There are many who are inclined to agree with them.

On the other hand, however, there are thousands of men and women of moderate means who have always wanted to own a home in the suburbs but who do not know just how to go about acquiring one. For the purpose of these city dwellers "The Sun" proposes to publish from time to time a series of articles dealing with the suburban home question and explaining the elementary rules which should govern the home seeker. This series will be illustrated with photographs and plans which will show different types of homes and give their cost.

Among the subjects which will be taken up will be the questions of transportation, location, installment payments, mortgages, cost of construction, and the architecture and other of a similar character. The increasing shortage of desirable apartments in the city and the great increase in the cost of the same have made these articles particularly opportune. In connection with this series

the real estate department will be glad to answer in these columns questions from home seekers, with the exceptions of queries of a legal nature or those relative to the value of specific properties.

In this issue appears the photograph and the plans for the two lower floors of a typical suburban residence of the better class at Mountain Lakes, N. J. A home of this type can be purchased for from \$5,000 to \$15,000. The home shown above can be constructed, at the present cost of building materials, for \$9,000, including the cost of the land. In subsequent issues "The Sun" will show photographs and plans of other suburban homes costing much less.

The house pictured above occupies a plot 100x155. The grounds are landscaped and planted with flowers and shrubs. The exterior of the house is constructed of stucco, with white trim, and the veranda floors are of solid concrete. The outside trim is white and cream.

The interior plaster walls are tinted and decorated in stencils. The first floor is finished in chestnut stained to represent oak. The woodwork of the second and third floors is whitewood enameled in old ivory. Wherever whitewood is used in the house the doors are mahogany. The bathrooms are tiled, with solid base tubs and handsome bathroom fittings. There is a separate room for the laundry, a large cellar under the entire house with a concrete floor, large coal bins and big storage spaces and closets.

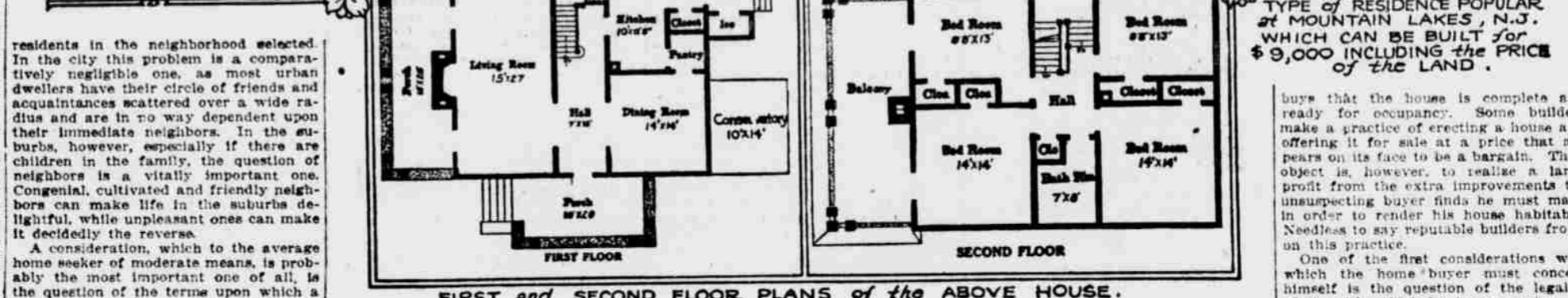
The accompanying plans do not show the third floor of the house, which contains two large bedrooms and a bathroom. A similar house of seven rooms and a bathroom can be constructed for from \$7,500 to \$8,000 under present conditions.

The pleasing features of this type of house are the large open fireplaces in the living room and the extensive use of wood paneling in the entrance hall, living room and dining room.

In selecting a suburban home the first thing to be decided upon is the location. New York has a number of attractive suburbs and the range of choice is a wide one. Individual tastes will undoubtedly be the deciding factor in making a selection. From time to time "The Sun" will take up different suburban residential sections and discuss them in detail.

In connection with the question of location the problem of transportation should be thoroughly gone into and the transportation facilities offered by any particular locality carefully examined. Bad or limited train service may make an otherwise attractive suburb an impractical residence for a home owner or professional man who is obliged to travel at his office at an early hour, or who is often compelled to work late in the evening.

Almost as important as the question of transportation is the character of the



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runs that the house is complete and ready for occupancy. Some builders make a practice of erecting a house and offering it for sale at a price that anticipates the cost of the improvements. It is, however, to realize a large profit from the extra improvements the unsuspecting buyer must make in order to render his house habitable. Needless to say reputable builders from this practice.

One of the first considerations with the home buyer is the question of the title which he is to acquire. It cannot be too strongly urged that every purchaser should have the title to the property he is to buy searched by a title guarantee and insurance company. There may be a blanket mortgage covering the property owned by a bankrupt, the legal chain of which even the seller may be ignorant.

In this respect it is far better to have the title search conducted by a company making this work its specialty than to rely on the professional advice of an at-

Many Points Must Be Considered in the Selection of a Home

turner. The lawyer merely gives his best opinion as to the legality of the title. In most cases his opinion may be the correct one, but if he should be mistaken the loss falls entirely upon the purchaser. The title company, however, agrees to back its opinion as to the validity of title by insuring the purchaser against loss should the title prove defective.

In regard to titles, it is well at this point to warn the inexperienced buyer to insist upon getting title at the time he makes his first payment. Many home seekers have entered into possession of what they regarded as their property upon a written contract to sell, only later to realize that their home was never legally theirs.

A contract to sell is a contract by which the vendor agrees upon receipt of a certain consideration to transfer title on the completion of the payment of the amount specified in the contract. When this contract is made by a company with an established reputation for fair dealing it may work out satisfactorily, but in this form of purchase there lurk many dangers for the unwary.

An unscrupulous vendor may transfer the title of the property to some one else and then abscond or go into bankruptcy. If he deceives the holder of the contract would have a legal action against him for the recovery of damages, but his chances of recovery would be small, and the home seeker would be left with a title to the property which could not be sold at pleasure. It should be obvious that this is an unsafe method of purchase in many instances and should be avoided if possible.

The most conservative way of acquiring a home and the one which should be followed if possible is to secure title upon the payment of the first installment.

In one popular suburban development the following plan is in vogue. The price of the property, let us say, is \$5,000. The buyer purchases the property outright, receiving title upon the payment of \$1,000. He assumes a first mortgage of \$5,000, gives to complete his purchase a second or "purchase money" mortgage for \$2,500, running to and a half year, payable in monthly, quarterly or semi-annual installments, to suit his convenience. After he has paid off this second mortgage his carrying charges will amount to \$35 a month, which he does not wish to pay off the entire first mortgage. In which case it will probably be added to the principal of the first mortgage, and he will go to the building loan association who will over his first mortgage and allow him to pay it off in installments. This, roughly, is the plan which, of course, has many modifications, and the nature of the property and its value.

The question of financing homes which are less expensive than the one illustrated will be dealt with in a subsequent issue.

TAX BILLS BEFORE
LEGISLATURE NOW
Measures Propose a Personal
Income Tax to Lift Burden From Realty.

By JOHN L. PARISH.
(Secretary of the New York Board of Title Underwriters.)

The bills which Senator Frederick M. Davenport's committee has finally determined upon for the reform of the tax systems, State and municipal, and for the raising of the revenue needed to pay the State's way for another year, were put into the hands of the Senate and Assembly at Albany on Friday.

The bills have not yet been printed, but may be made available for examination by Tuesday or Wednesday next. Senator Davenport has, however, issued a preliminary statement, from which it appears that he had followed closely the recommendations of the Advisory Council of Real Estate Interests, the National Tax Reform Association's model plan of municipal taxation and of the Mayor's Advisory Commission on Taxation.

Of special significance to real estate interests in this city is Senator Davenport's statement that "real estate is already bearing much more than its share and it is impossible to depend upon taxation of personal property as an adequate source of revenue, personal property taxation at the existing confiscatory rate having lamentably failed."

Accordingly the committee recommends a personal income tax as the core of the proposed system. This is to be levied at 2 per cent. on all incomes, with the exemptions of \$1,000 for single persons and \$2,000 for married, with \$200 more for each dependent child. The revenue obtained from this tax is to be shared equally by the State and the municipality where it is collected.

Personal property is to pay a fixed rate of one-half of 1 per cent. on all tangible property in excess of \$3,000 worth in any single ownership. Hitherto personal property has been taxed at a rate of a half of 1 per cent. but with so many exemptions that but little of it has been taxed at all. It is the belief of many economists that a fixed rate of a half of 1 per cent. will encourage a much wider listing of personal property for taxation and so result in a material increase in the revenue from this source.

The third source from which the committee seeks to realize increased revenue is the income of manufacturing and mercantile corporations. As to these incomes the rate is advanced from the present 3 per cent. to 4 1/2 per cent.

Bills for the three sources of revenue were introduced by Senator Davenport in the Senate and by Assemblyman Franklin M. Judson in the Assembly on Friday. They are to be followed by other bills early next week, one of which is to clothe municipalities with authority to levy a business tax or an occupation tax wherever either or both are deemed necessary to supply any possible deficiency in the local revenue. There may be also one or more bills providing present sources of personal property taxation, but of this series

of the proposed legislation Senator Davenport's statement did not treat. These are the results of nearly three months of diligent and attentive committee work in dealing with a problem of extraordinary difficulty. Not only have State and municipal expenses grown beyond all precedent, partly as the direct effects of war conditions, but both State and municipality have lost large sources of revenue in the legal prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors.

Other sources of revenue had to be established to make up for these losses. Unless something in the direction taken had been done there would have been no possible escape from a ruinous increase in the direct tax—the tax on real estate.

The trend of legislation, as indicated by the scores of bills presented in the Legislature, was in the opposite direction, however, the great majority of them having had in view more or less drastic measures for beating the personal property bushes, nobody, not even Comptroller Travis, having suggested an increase of the tax rate on real estate.

Indeed, the entire discussion from the beginning has been directed to the relief of real property from the disproportionate and unjust straits of taxation of recent years. In this respect the Real Estate Board's bill for a minimum 2 per cent. rate and the vigorous work of the experts they had consulted, which was unquestionably a fruitful of good results. It at least served to fix the main purpose of the legislation in view so that there was no escape from it.

It is too much to expect that everybody will be satisfied with these bills, but fair-minded people in general will agree that the committee has done its work well. The problem was not an easy one, the contentions of extremists, doctrinaires and selfish interests were distracting in the extreme, while the social political party persisted in their endeavors to make partisan capital out of it. There was really danger at one time that the committee would prevent action of any kind at this session. When, on Wednesday, however, United States Senator Calder threw the weight of his advice and opinion into the scales party considerations were swept aside and the committee decided to take the course recommended to them by the experts they had consulted, which was the course dictated by purely economic considerations free from all taint of partisanship.

Real estate interests here and throughout the State will recognize in the Davenport-Judson bills a fair measure of justice and consideration and will doubtless unite promptly to see that they are enacted into law.

NEW APARTMENT PROJECTED.

J. E. R. Carpenter, architect of many apartment houses, including 907 Fifth avenue, 550, 552 and 560 Park avenue, has completed plans and has let contracts for a building to be ready for occupancy in the next few months. The structure, with two four-room and two six-room suites on a floor, Pease & Elliman, who will be the renting agents for the building, said it is to be improved, which is at 115-119 East Eighty-second street, 75x100.

BOY-HOTEL LEASED.

The Bibb Operating Company leased from the Boy-Hotel Corporation the nine-story hotel, 13x100, at the northeast corner of Madison avenue and Ninety-second street for ten years from April 1 at an annual rental of \$25,000. The lease was acquired title to the property by the company.

Own Your Own Apartment Colony Planned
for the Midwood Section of Flatbush

Scheme to Bring the Cooperative Purchase System Within Reach of the Man With a Moderate Sized Income—Servants to Be Furnished by the Hour

To the city dweller, harassed by rising rents and lack of desirable living space, the cooperative purchase system is a new and attractive scheme. The plan is to build a large apartment colony in the Midwood section of Flatbush, on land which the company has held undeveloped for sixteen years.

If the plans of the company are carried out in detail the Midwood Colony, as the settlement is to be known, will be a city within a city. A system of community buying, laundering, etc., may be worked out to meet the everyday needs of the residents. The colony will cover a tract of about 600 city lots bounded by Ocean avenue on the west, Flatbush and Nostrand avenues on the east and Avenue G on the north. Last year the land was used for war gardening purposes.

Will Require Over \$10,000,000.

When the colony is completed it will represent, according to present estimates, the largest scheme of its kind ever undertaken. The buildings will be erected in groups, each operation costing about \$450,000. Within the next few days ground will probably be broken for the erection of the first five buildings, each of which will accommodate sixteen families. Those who cannot see their way clear to buy suites on the easy terms arranged by the company may lease apartments.

The Midwood Colony is the heart of Flatbush, the most exclusive residential section, said an official of the Harman company yesterday in discussing the plan. "To-day it is conceded the most desirable and interesting undeveloped body of land in the Borough of Brooklyn. For sixteen years we have held this property of the market against the insistence of friends and the pressure of the public. Our purpose was to wait until this beautiful district took on its permanent character, and then lay out our development along lines of ultimate attractiveness and utility."

It should be understood in the beginning that while our comprehensive programme embraces a large number of community features—features that seem to fit into, simplify yet enrich the modern scheme of living—only those will be introduced that can stand the test of practicality, while those that fail to meet the demands of business considerations will be disregarded, even though they may be interesting and aesthetically desirable.

Plan for Beautifying Section.

"Our general scheme contemplates the improvement and embellishment of all streets and the parking of Avenue H from Ocean avenue near the Brighton Beach-Union Turnpike station to Nostrand and Flatbush avenues—the terminus of the Interborough subway. Avenue H thus improved will become the most perfectly equipped avenue for its length in Greater New York."

"From the centre of the Midwood colony it is but six minutes' walk to either of the two great subway systems. Along the southern border of the property against the Long Island Railroad cut will be planted double rows of Lombardy poplars, with a low fence covered with rambling roses and honeysuckles."

"Avenue H will be bordered on both sides with apartment houses of various designs and floor plans, all built with a view to their value as permanent investments rather than buildings for sale. These apartment houses will range from the highest class near Ocean avenue and may be unable to renew the mortgage when it falls due. A financial institution, however, invariably seeks to keep as much of its capital safely invested as long as possible and as long as the owner does not allow his property to



run down and depreciate in value is usually willing to renew the mortgage indefinitely.

In selecting a house which is already built the buyer should satisfy himself that it is substantially constructed and that it was not erected with cheap materials merely for the purpose of being sold as rapidly as possible. He should also satisfy himself before he builds or

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ants and to make our district attractive can be easily understood. The plan for five buildings, involving about \$500,000, and the improvement of the first section of Avenue H is about ready for actual work. This will constitute our first unit of the property.

"Conditions of the building and material market are so unstable that it is not considered wise to go further at this time, but as said before, as rapidly as conditions justify this plan will be carried out in its effort to approach the perfect apartment building and perfectly conducted city and rural ideal."

"As stated in the beginning, the hard and fixed rules of enlightened business selfishness are lacking of this whole programme. It is believed that no adventure into a new field of business can be successful unless it meets the requirements of economic logic and the greatest success is those which most perfectly combine utilitarianism with imaginative ideals."

Recreational Facilities.

"This stretch of greensward will be divided into sections, generally corresponding to street blocks, and given over alternately to decorative gardens, small parks, shelter and playgrounds and tennis courts, through the entire expanse of the property, thus giving every member easy access to a recreation ground in his own immediate neighborhood."

"These parks will not be permanent, but will be the last of the property to be developed. On Bedford avenue, which has been effected by the Bergen County Board of Taxation on the appeal of the United Piece Dye Works of Lodi, the \$2,500,000 valuation placed on the property by Assessor Martin Pleas being reduced to \$1,385,000, or a pruning of \$1,115,000. The new assessment is \$160,000 more than last year. The Lodi Borough Council is not satisfied with the decision of the county board and will undoubtedly appeal to the State Board of Taxation and Assessment. As a result of this cut in valuations the tax rate for Lodi this year is \$2.27 per \$100 of taxable value, an increase of 25 points over 1918."

MAKES BIG ASSESSMENT CUT.

Board in Bergen County, N. J., Prunes \$1,115,000 From Dye Plant.

The biggest assessment cut made in the history of Bergen County, N. J., has just been effected by the Bergen County Board of Taxation on the appeal of the United Piece Dye Works of Lodi, the \$2,500,000 valuation placed on the property by Assessor Martin Pleas being reduced to \$1,385,000, or a pruning of \$1,115,000. The new assessment is \$160,000 more than last year. The Lodi Borough Council is not satisfied with the decision of the county board and will undoubtedly appeal to the State Board of Taxation and Assessment. As a result of this cut in valuations the tax rate for Lodi this year is \$2.27 per \$100 of taxable value, an increase of 25 points over 1918.

WILL SELL BROOKLYN LOTS.

Company to Close Estate of Marie A. Gelston at Executors' Sale.

At executors' sale to close the estate of Marie A. Gelston, the Jerome Johnson Jr. Company will sell 38 Brooklyn lots on Monday night, April 14, at 8 P. M., in the Brooklyn Real Estate Exchange, 189 Montague street.

These lots are located on 4th avenue, 87th and 95th streets. Fort Hamilton avenue, 524 street and Battery avenue. A majority of the lots are 25 feet in width.

BROADWAY LOFT SOLD.

The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company is reported to have sold the nine-story store and loft building at 185 and 187 Broadway, southwest corner of Prince street, on a plot 51x100. There is a branch of the Metropolitan Bank in the building. The sellers acquired the property in September, 1917.

BRONX BLOCK WORTH
HALF MILLION SOLD
Buyer Gives Apartment and Home in Part Payment.

L. J. Phillips & Co. and Brooks & Momand negotiated an exchange transaction yesterday involving properties worth close to \$1,000,000. For the Remuda Realty Company, H. U. Stinch president, the brokers sold to Zeile Van Ralke, the property known as the Singhi Building, covering a block of apartment houses on the north side of Fordham road, between Jerome and Morris avenues, at one of the busiest centres in the west Bronx.

The property consists of a four-story and two-story taxpayer at the Jerome avenue end and a three-story apartment house on Morris avenue. It is located right at the Fordham road subway station at Jerome avenue, which is the important business centre of Fordham. The property was valued at \$500,000 and has a frontage of 240 feet of Jerome avenue and 165 feet on Morris avenue.

In part payment Mr. Van Ralke gave his residence at 4 West Seventy-fifth street, covering a block of apartment houses at the southeast corner of West End avenue and Eighty-second street, known as the Carlisle dwellings. The latter structure occupies a site fronting 192.2 feet on West End avenue and 101.8 feet on Eighty-second street and is one of the best constructed of the older group of apartments along West End avenue. It is arranged in suites of ten and eleven rooms and three baths. The Seventy-fifth street house is a four-story and two-story dwelling and occupies a lot 22x102.2, located just west of Central Park West.

BUY SITE FOR FACTORY.

Plans Case Manufacturers Find Location in L. I. City.

Joe N. Courtnide & Son, piano case manufacturers, have an industrial site in Long Island City on Jackson avenue, close to the bridge plaza. They will erect immediately a six-story concrete building in which they will combine their several branches now at Nashville and Louisville, Ky., and their warehouse and manufacturing plant in Manhattan.

The plot is 110 feet on Jackson avenue, running 210 feet to the railroad. The price reported is in the neighborhood of \$100,000. The building to be erected is to be of the most modern and attractive industrial type.

The property has been in the ownership of Mrs. Irene V. Paynter for the last forty years. The Paynters were one of the oldest families and largest owners of realty in Long Island City, their home being in the old house at 100 West 10th street, now the Bridge Plaza from Jackson to the East River. William D. Bloodgood & Co., Inc., are the brokers who negotiated this transaction.

HISTORIC TIMOTHY
BALL HOME IS SOLD
House Built in 1743 by Cousin
of Washington Acquired
by a Syndicate.

The old "Timothy Ball House," on Ridgewood road, South Orange township, with about four acres of ground, has just been sold to a group of New York and Maplewood men. This house was built in 1743 by Timothy Ball, a third cousin of Gen. Washington, who frequently visited his relatives there during the Revolutionary war. The house is located on the slope of the mountain between South Orange and Maplewood, in full view of several battlefields where the British and American armies camped for many months during the war.

The section was formerly known as Jefferson Village, a nearby street now being known as Jefferson avenue, and it was the centre of a settlement consisting of stores, small factories, a tavern and farm houses.

There have been but few transfers of the property since Revolutionary times, and if the old house could be traced to extremely interesting history could doubtless be compiled in connection with its experiences during the Revolutionary war, the war of 1812, our own civil war and on down to the present time.

It is the hope of the new owners that sufficient interest will be aroused in New Jersey to warrant them in preserving this old landmark for future generations. Any one in possession of authentic information as to additional facts concerning the history of this old building will confer a favor if they will communicate with the syndicate, 33 Woodland road, Maplewood, N. J.

The purchase of the Ball tract is in conjunction with the acquisition of the one-acre tract on Ridgewood road, about seven acres, and also a portion of the O'Brien property, the three plots having a frontage on Ridgewood road of approximately 600 feet and on Cedar lane of over 500 feet.

The new owners of the old house propose to give it a proper setting by erecting a new residence on the site, a restricted residence park to be known as Washington Park. It is planned to put in streets, sewers, water, gas and electric lights and to lay out the tract in lots with a seventy-five foot frontage.

A brook fed by mountain springs runs in a ditch through the tract, crossing the centre of the property and this tract in conjunction with the fine elevation on the mountain side, the proximity to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's branch of the Lackawanna railroad, will tend to make the new development one of the most attractive in the Oranges.

The sale of these properties was negotiated through J. G. Truett Moore of East Orange and J. Charles O'Brien & Co. of South Orange and New York. Both Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Moore are residents of Maplewood.